



**THE SERVICES OF THE
BAPTISMAL COVENANT
IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT IV

*AS REVISED TO ALIGN WITH
THE 2008 BOOK OF DISCIPLINE AND BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS*

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THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT IV
CONGREGATIONAL REAFFIRMATION OF
THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT

This service is for use by a congregation when there are no candidates to be baptized, confirmed, or received into baptized or professing membership, especially on Easter, Pentecost, All Saints Day, and Baptism of the Lord.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERVICE

A deacon or pastor addresses the congregation:

Brothers and sisters in Christ:

Through the Sacrament of Baptism

we are initiated into Christ's holy Church.

We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation
and given new birth through water and the Spirit.

All this is God's gift, offered to us without price.

Through the reaffirmation of our faith

we renew the covenant declared at our baptism,
acknowledge what God is doing for us,
and affirm our commitment to Christ's holy Church.

If desired, the Thanksgiving over the Water may precede the Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith.

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

Since the earliest times, the vows of the Baptismal Covenant have consisted first of the renunciation of all that is evil and then the profession of faith and loyalty to Christ.

The pastor addresses the congregation, and the congregation responds:

On behalf of the whole Church, I ask you:

Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness,
reject the evil powers of this world,
and repent of your sin?

I do.

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you
to resist evil, injustice, and oppression
in whatever forms they present themselves?

I do.

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THANKSGIVING

A deacon or pastor leads the congregation to give thanks:

Let us rejoice in the faithfulness of our covenant God.

We give thanks for all that God has already given us.

As members of the body of Christ

and in this congregation of The United Methodist Church,

we will faithfully participate in the ministries of the Church

by our prayers, our presence, our gifts,

our service and our witness

that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

The pastor addresses those reaffirming the Baptismal Covenant:

The God of all grace,

who has called us to eternal glory in Christ,

establish and strengthen you

by the power of the Holy Spirit,

that you may live in grace and peace.

Signs of peace may be exchanged.

An appropriate hymn, stanza, or response may be sung. Other hymns of Christian commitment are also appropriate.

It is most fitting that the service should continue with Holy Communion.

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior,
put your whole trust in his grace,
and promise to serve him as your Lord,
in union with the Church which Christ has opened
to people of all ages, nations, and races?

I do.

According to the grace given to you,
will you remain faithful members of Christ's holy Church
and serve as Christ's representatives in the world?

I will.

A deacon or pastor leads the confession of faith:

Let us join together in professing the Christian faith

as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
[who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.]**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
[the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.]**

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

A deacon or lay leader may pour water for reaffirmation into the font at this time in such a way that the congregation can see and hear the water.

This prayer is led by the pastor and joined by the people. It recalls scriptural images and meanings of Holy Baptism and is comparable to the Great Thanksgiving at Holy Communion. All may stand.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

The pastor may raise hands in the ancient Christian posture of prayer, and invite the congregation to do likewise.

Eternal Father:

When nothing existed but chaos,
you swept across the dark waters
and brought forth light.

In the days of Noah

you saved those on the ark through water.

After the flood you set in the clouds a rainbow.

When you saw your people as slaves in Egypt,
you led them to freedom through the sea.

Their children you brought through the Jordan
to the land which you promised.

****Sing to the Lord, all the earth.**

Tell of God's mercy each day.

In the fullness of time you sent Jesus,
nurtured in the water of a womb.

He was baptized by John and anointed by your Spirit.

He called his disciples

to share in the baptism of his death and resurrection
and to make disciples of all nations.

****Declare Christ's works to the nations,
his glory among all the people.**

The pastor may place hands in or over the water, stir the water, or lift the water.

Pour out your Holy Spirit,
and by this gift of water call to our remembrance
the grace declared to us in our baptism.

For you have washed away our sins,
and you clothe us with righteousness throughout our lives,
that dying and rising with Christ
we may share in his final victory.

****All praise to you, Eternal Father,
through your Son Jesus Christ,
who with you and the Holy Spirit
lives and reigns for ever. Amen.**

REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Acts of reaffirmation are not acts of rebaptism. When the congregation reaffirms the Baptismal Covenant, a deacon or pastor may invite the people to come to the water as the pastor says:

Remember your baptism and be thankful. **Amen.**

Appropriate ways persons may use the water include:

- a) Touching the water and making the sign of the cross on their own foreheads;*
- b) Scooping up the water and letting it fall back into the font;*
- c) Scooping it over their heads, or hands, or to refresh their faces.*
- d) Or, a deacon, the pastor, or other assistants may use an asperges, evergreen branch or other means to sprinkle small amounts of water toward the congregation. This parallels sprinkling with hyssop for purification (Exodus 12:22 ; Psalm 51:7) and sprinkling as a sign of renewal (Ezekiel 36:25 –26).*

The pastor addresses those reaffirming the Baptismal Covenant:

The Holy Spirit work within you,
that having been born through water and the Spirit,
you may live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.
Amen.